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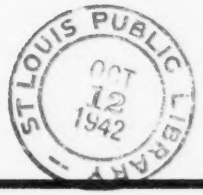

What Americans Think About Post-War Reconstruction

IN NEW ENGLAND, by Walter K. Schwinn
IN THE SOUTH, by Virginius Dabney
IN THE MIDDLE WEST, by William H. Hessler
IN THE NORTHWEST, by Herbert Lewis

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What Americans Think About Post-War Reconstruction

The preoccupation of the Washington Administration with problems of post-war reconstruction, indicated in official speeches excerpts from which were published in the September 15 issue of FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS, *is shared by the American public. In an attempt to ascertain the main trends of public opinion on this subject, the Foreign Policy Association has invited four newspaper editors to give their views on current thought in four different regions of the country. Similar soundings made in other regions will be presented in subsequent* REPORTS.

The four editors whose conclusions are published here agree that the American people reject both isolation and imperialism but have as yet formulated no clear ideas about the future. In their opinion, however, the American people are more prepared than in the past to have the United States accept political obligations—if not yet economic commitments that might involve national sacrifices in terms of living standards.

To provide a basis for comparison between American opinion on post-war plans and that in Britain, the Foreign Policy Association will publish, on October 15, a REPORT *on what the British think about post-war reconstruction.*

—Editor.

IN NEW ENGLAND—

BY WALTER K. SCHWINN, *Associate Editor,* The Hartford Courant; *Chairman, Hartford Branch of the Foreign Policy Association.*

IN New England the events of December 7, 1941 brought the debate on the relationship of the United States to the war to an end, but not to a conclusion. In the face of the attack on Pearl Harbor all responsible parties to the debate instantly—and sincerely—agreed that the nation must fight not only the Japanese but the Germans and the Italians, as well as the small allies of the totalitarian powers.

NEW ENGLAND ON THE BATTLE LINE

Yet the mere termination of the debate in an agreement to repel attack did not mean that a fundamental understanding had been reached as to the nature, the strategy, and the ultimate objectives of the war. The rival committees closed their offices, abandoned their meetings, and destroyed their literature, while the overwhelming majority of their members moved simultaneously and harmoniously to the recruiting offices and the volunteer agencies. The unity thus demonstrated was not merely formal. As far as it went, it was honest, conscientious, genuine. But having been achieved by fortuitous external circumstances rather than through inner conviction it did not go, nor has it yet gone, much beyond an agreement of the previously opposed forces to stand together on the immediate battle line.

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To say this is not to imply that the one-time opponents of intervention are merely biding their time, waiting like temporarily frustrated conspirators for a more favorable moment in which to renew their machinations. Such persons may exist, but New England thus far has not witnessed their outward manifestations. The persisting confusion about the war does not take the form of open resistance to its prosecution; it is hardly expressed in words. Most generally, it reveals itself obliquely in grumbling complaints over such a war-born nuisance as rationing, in pessimism concerning the possibility of economic stability after the war, in worry over the administration of the war effort. Nor are such expressions confined to individuals who before December 7 opposed the involvement of the United States in the war. They are voiced also by many who a year ago were foremost in urging vigorous support by the United States of the active anti-Axis powers.

Because the debate did not reach a definite conclusion, and because in large measure it revolved about matters other than the historic nature of the war itself, the current attitude of New England toward the conflict seems to be that it is a grim necessity, not a challenging opportunity. The people of New England are ready to meet any concrete demand made upon them. Young men go uncomplainingly into the armed services; the number of conscientious objectors, with which the colleges seemingly were filled only a short time ago, is almost negligible. Wage-earners steadily buy stamps and bonds. Housewives cooperate eagerly in every program for salvage. Industrial workers endure the long hours, the inadequate housing, the cramped transportation and the other discomforts of boom-town living for which not even record wages can wholly compensate. The people of New England, in short, are at the moment "all-out" for the doing of all such things as will obviously and directly contribute to a quick, complete military victory; and although one or another individual may occasionally be heard wearily confessing that he does not precisely foresee how a military victory can ever be won, the overwhelming majority not only have confidence that it can be achieved, but are willing to make tangible material sacrifices in order to speed its coming.

NO CLEAR VISION OF POST-WAR AIMS

The vision falters when the vista beyond victory is contemplated. The people of New England know why they are fighting—because the country was attacked—but they seem not to be wholly sure of what, if anything, they are fighting for beyond the crushing of their enemies. A general agreement exists that "something ought to be done" to make certain that never again, or at least not within the predictable future, will the nation have to undergo the hardships, the losses and the griefs that now confront it. Hardly any one, whether erstwhile interventionist or erstwhile isolationist, will deny that the United States probably would have done better twenty years ago had it cooperated more closely with the rest of the world in establishing an international organization under which such a violent upheaval as the present one would have been rendered impossible.

Hence, the people of the section listen without protest and with interest to all proposals put forward for the maintenance of order and the reconstruction of international society once the military victory is won. If they do not enthusiastically approve, neither do they emphatically reject such elaborations of the Atlantic Charter as the proposal that the victors in the war "police" the vanquished for an indefinite period of time, the proposal that food be made available to all the sufferers in Europe and in Asia once the conflict has been ended, the proposal that no monetary repayment be sought for goods and services furnished the United Nations under the Lend-Lease Act. Moreover, they are entirely willing to give a hearing to such additional proposals as the one that the United States largely promote the rehabilitation, physically, economically and financially, of the devastated regions after the war, even should this task entail the impairment, if not the abandonment, of some long-established sectional interests.

NEGATIVE VIEW OF WAR

Yet the assumption cannot confidently be entertained that, because the people of New England give a hearing to plans for a better future, they are dynamically committed to their achievement. The fact would seem to be that, at the moment, they are primarily interested not so much in the creation of a new society as in the mere suppression of the physical forces apparently responsible for the breakdown of the existing one. The attitude is not positive but negative. Thus, probably relatively few persons in New England have a feeling of kinship with the masses in India as they strive for political independence. Probably only a slightly larger number feel themselves at one with the coolies of China as they fight not only for national sovereignty but also for a developing equalitarian democracy. And still fewer entertain a feeling of sympathy for the workers of Russia in any other role than as national patriots defending the soil of their own fatherland. The events of the past year may have softened the attitudes of some toward communism, but all the United Nations are

judged primarily by the contributions they are making toward the military defeat of the Axis. As the representatives of creative revolutionary movements they are recognized only with marked reserve.

The situation is still fluid, for the failure of New Englanders to reach definite conclusions as to the nature of the war before they were plunged into it only means that they must attempt to reach them as the war is fought. There are indications that the development of their thinking will be toward a more creative attitude than is now generally held. The most important one, perhaps, is the circumstance that if looking ahead is hard for New Englanders, so also is looking backward. The two decades that intervened between the wars were not, on the whole, good ones for this section. Even before 1929 New Englanders had reason to know that their progress and their prosperity were not absolutely guaranteed by the set of policies that had seemed, before 1914, to be so efficacious. No tariff, for example, could prevent textile mills from moving toward the cheap sources of hydroelectric power, no restrictive immigration laws could prevent an employer from taking advantage of the pools of cheap labor to be found in the hills of Tennessee, no monetary repayment of international debts could make up for lost foreign markets. The bitter experiences of the thirties only confirmed a deepening disillusionment, with the result that when a number of newspapers, Republican in persuasion, dared to assail the whole philosophy on which the Smoot-Hawley tariff was based, the ensuing protests were for the most part only traditional and purely formal.

HOW WAR MAY SHAPE THE FUTURE

Moreover, the experience of the war itself is giving one element in New England—the workers in the war industries—a fresh, direct appreciation of the power of a philosophy of abundance. After nearly a decade of widespread idleness, virtually all men who can work—and a rapidly growing number of women—have jobs. They know from direct experience the productive possibilities inherent in the nation, and they may not easily be persuaded that goods enough for all can be turned out only in time of war. To whatever extent full employment and full production can be made a practical, integral part of a social program to be won along with the war, powerful support for it can be enlisted here. With a record of fewer strikes and greater production than many sections can boast, the worker in New England has made, and is still making, a vital contribution to military victory. The opportunity exists for him to make an equally signal contribution to the winning of the peace.

Against such factors must be set others operating in a different direction. The traditional conservatism of the region is not to be forgotten, and it may be enhanced by the circumstance that New England, by reason of its geography, may suffer considerably more from the shortage of transportation—by rail and by sea—than most other sections. Although it grumbles, it accepts the need for rationing, but already the shortages of sugar and of rubber have inspired just such a demand for self-sufficiency as Vice President Wallace warned against on July 12 in connection with the creation of the synthetic rubber industry. More than most sections, perhaps, New England is dependent on its automobiles for both long- and short-haul transportation. Should existing tires give out long before synthetic substitutes become generally available, the result may be an insistent demand for complete independence from the natural product in the future—a demand that would inevitably play into the hands of nationalistic economic interests.

What New Englanders generally seem not yet fully to have achieved during the war is a dynamic, constructive, buoyant belief in the tremendous work that they are doing. They want a victory, a complete military victory, but they have still to come to an understanding within themselves as to how the victory is to be used. Some tend to view military victory as an end in itself, lest any other interpretation open the way to a social future of a kind to which their prejudices cannot easily accommodate themselves. The majority have still to make up their minds as to what they desire. The failure to reach a conclusion in the pre-war debate still pursues them, and they are consequently as yet unable, to use the recent words of Julian Huxley, to agree upon "the need for entering upon our revolution consciously and of set purpose, deliberately guiding its course instead of allowing its blind forces to push and buffet our unplanned lives."

The attitude of New Englanders in many important ways has been exemplary. They are not giving voice to indiscriminate hate. The many enemy aliens in their urban centers have been most considerately treated. Hysterical outbursts against things, names and persons of German origin have been virtually nonexistent. The conscientious objector is treated tolerantly. The Negro has been granted increased opportunities in the industry of the region, taking his place, in many cases with commendation, at the side of the white man.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

What is not so clear is that such conduct is the result of creative democratic thinking, of hearty devotion to the Four Freedoms. It might also be the result of indifference and resignation. Yet such a conclusion seems to be historically improbable. In the past, New England has not stood apart from the great revolutionary movements of history. Its tendency has been not merely to move with them but to bestride them, guiding them along the course that its deep moral sense and its urgent prophetic instincts have dictated. A section whose responses to the challenges of 1776 and of 1861 were so vital, so constructive and so dynamic is not likely to be unmoved by the sweeping challenge of the 1940's. What New England did not do to clear its mind and to sharpen its purpose before the war, it will almost certainly do in the midst of the conflict.

IN THE SOUTH—

BY VIRGINIUS DABNEY, *Editor,* Richmond Times-Dispatch; *and author,* Below The Potomac.

For many years, the South has been less isolationist than most areas of the United States. In Woodrow Wilson's unsuccessful fight for adherence to the Covenant of the League of Nations, only five negative votes were cast by Southern Senators when ratification was finally defeated in 1920. The South has had a similar record in recent years. The leading polls of opinion before Pearl Harbor showed the region to be the most interventionist of all, and its overwhelmingly favorable votes in Congress on such vital issues as lend-lease and extension of the draft saved those measures from defeat. It will be recalled that the draft extension was approved in the House of Representatives last year by a majority of only one. Twelve Southern states cast 102 votes in favor of this bill and only 6 against it, whereas the House delegations from eleven Midwestern states voted 100 to 18 in the negative.

SOUTHERN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Since the Southern states were unsympathetic to isolationism before this country's active belligerency, they are even more so today. Such an anti-British and noncollaborationist Senator as Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina speaks for neither his own constituents nor the region as a whole. Much more representative of Southern thought and opinion in this sphere are the annual conferences on The South and International Affairs, sponsored by the Southern Council on International Relations, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. These gatherings of about a hundred Southern leaders in the fields of education, journalism, law, finance and religion have taken an increasingly advanced position concerning the responsibility of the United States for building an enduring peace after the war, in cooperation with other nations. At the conference last spring, a resolution was adopted by the Committee on the South's Part in the Organization of Peace, declaring that "the fundamental principles of equality and reduction of barriers to economic interchange among all nations which underlie the Hull Trade Agreements Program, the Atlantic Charter, the Declaration of the United Nations and the Anglo-American agreement are approved, and all agencies of public education are urged to make them known and understood, as they are essential to the organization of peace and the establishment of an increased standard of living for all peoples."

At the same conference, the council's Committee on the South's Part in Inter-American Cooperation adopted resolutions urging that "the teaching of Spanish and other foreign languages be extended in Southern schools and Portuguese be introduced wherever possible; that libraries and universities establish exchanges of magazines and other publications with the countries of Latin America; that steps be taken to reduce the expense of forwarding books and magazines to Latin America; and that efforts be continued toward economic and commercial cooperation with Latin America, with emphasis on increasing production in Latin America with a view to improving standards of living and increasing the purchasing power of those countries." The committee also suggested that the council plan to hold a meeting in one of the Caribbean

countries to aid in the establishment of a real cultural inter-American union. In view of the South's geographical proximity to Central and South America, and the fact that all the Gulf states have Hispanic elements in their cultural backgrounds, the sympathetic interest of Southern leaders in the foregoing problems is natural, but none the less significant.

The Southern Council on International Relations also considered the impact of the war on the South at its spring meeting, and a special committee brought in resolutions on the subject. These asked institutions of higher learning to "maintain their high standards" during the accelerated program in education; proposed absorption after the war by an expanded Southern industry of the skilled laborers being trained in the region; urged a research program for the South to determine "the best way to convert war plants into peacetime industries, locate new industrial sites, develop foreign and domestic markets, to solve the problems of small business units and maintain primary markets for farmers and small communities, and to determine the possible uses of the vast power being developed by the TVA in the South." The committee also urged "support of the Southern Governors Conference in its fight for freight rate adjustments and elimination of trade barriers between states."

The conference as a whole approved a suggestion that peace treaties be approved hereafter by a simple majority of the United States Senate, instead of the present two-thirds. It also decided to establish six centers in the South for the study of the organization of peace, but after adjournment it was felt that there should be fifteen of these centers, at least one in each of the ten Southeastern states. Inter-American affairs also will be on the agenda of the study centers. The task of organizing them was undertaken recently by Dr. Keener C. Frazer, secretary of the council.

The fact that important leaders in a large section of America have embarked on so comprehensive a study of the war and its aftermath, and are viewing the future so intelligently and open-mindedly, must be considered a heartening phenomenon in these trying times. It cannot be said that the delegates to the annual meetings of the Southern Council on International Relations necessarily represent prevailing sentiment below the Potomac and the Ohio, for they are leaders in their communities, and are invited to the conferences by virtue of that fact. However, it would seem that, with opinion among Southern leaders so preponderantly in favor of organized international action after the war, better relations with Latin America, and an immediate program of planning for the most advantageous post-war development of Southern industry, the Southern masses probably tend to be of the same mind.

One should always remember, however, that even Southern students of international affairs are far from unanimous at this stage concerning the precise forms of organization they desire to see emerge from the holocaust. Some prefer Federal Union, some lean toward a revived and strengthened League of Nations, others feel that regional governments would be preferable, and so on. There has been no crystallization of views among thoughtful and informed Southerners, much less among the Southern rank and file. But while this is true, the current trend is clearly in the direction of some form of effective international collaboration.

One's guess at this stage—and it is only a guess—is that after the war there will be a greater willingness than ever before on the part of Southerners to participate in policing the world jointly with other powers, even if this entails relinquishment of certain sovereign rights by the United States. Many Southerners, like other Americans, have come to see that it is in their own best interests to participate in a joint reconstruction of the devastated regions when the war is over. It seems scarcely probable, however, that they would accept a lowering of their living standards as part of a program of post-war reconstruction. This would be apt to impress them as carrying international altruism to inordinate lengths.

RECIPROCAL TRADE TREATIES FAVORED

On the contrary, Southerners have been indoctrinated rather heavily with the thesis which underlies the reciprocal trade pacts, namely, that a freer interchange of goods would *raise* the living standards of all concerned. In 1938, for example, the Gallup poll found that 92 per cent of the people in the South favored the principles behind the program of reciprocal trade treaties sponsored by Secretary of State Cordell Hull. This finding was somewhat vitiated by the simultaneous revelation that half of those canvassed had never heard that Mr. Hull or anybody else was seeking to put the principles into practice. Yet the overwhelming desire of the people of this section for a general lowering of trade barriers was impressive. It was indicative of the Southern support which such a program will have after the war, assuming an Allied victory.

This attitude is only natural when one considers the extent to which the South is dependent on foreign markets. While certain manufacturing interests from Virginia to Texas have been protariff for many years, the basic orientation of the region has always been in the opposite direction. This was as true in 1824, when the South's repre-

sentatives in both the Senate and the House voted almost solidly against Henry Clay's tariff of that year, as it is today. It has often been pointed out that the tariff has forced the predominantly agricultural South to buy in a protected domestic market, but to sell most of its products in an unprotected foreign market.

A growing impatience with traditional imperialism, and with its exploitation of subject races, seems characteristic of a certain type of thinking in the present-day South, although here, too, it would be premature to indicate that opinion has crystallized. While the more reflective element has decided that the bankruptcy of imperialism has been all too vividly demonstrated in the Far East, most Southerners may have reached no conclusions one way or the other. And if students of foreign affairs are apt to feel that extraterritoriality in China will certainly have to be abandoned after the war, if not before, the average citizen does not yet grasp the meaning of the term.

There seems to be a vaguely defined feeling, among those who have thought about the nature of the post-war world, that it must be a different world from the one which has brought us face to face with destruction. Hardly any one in the South who has given attention to international questions wants to restore the balance of power system which prevailed in 1939. It is realized generally among students that it cannot, and ought not to, return. But when the problem is posed concerning the type of world polity that should emerge out of the conflict, it is obvious that public opinion is still in an inchoate state. Too many factors in the equation remain to be determined. Since we cannot know how long the war will last, we can have no notion as to what the economic situation will be when peace comes in such countries as the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China, to say nothing of the conquered and starving continent of Europe, and Germany itself. If the victorious nations are themselves virtually bankrupt, events will take one direction and the future will necessarily be ominous. If, on the other hand, the major powers among the United Nations are financially and economically strong enough to lead us back to prosperity and peace, events will take a quite different direction.

IN THE MIDDLE WEST—

BY WILLIAM H. HESSLER, *Foreign Editor,* The Cincinnati Enquirer; *author,* Our Ineffective State; *and First Vice President, Cincinnati Branch of the F.P.A.*

The people of the Middle West, in the main, have repudiated isolation as a formula of foreign policy, but they have not gone far beyond that to develop a positive faith in any post-war program of international collaboration. They are in a twilight zone, having shaken off one religion without embracing any other. This appears to be the dominant public opinion of the Midwestern area.

There are not many ways of gauging public opinion, and one must necessarily rely on impressions rather than on ascertained facts of any quantitative value. Opinion on this particular subject may vary somewhat from state to state and among various economic classes. But there is little cleavage on economic lines with respect to foreign policy, and not much even on party lines, although Democrats are more vocal in their espousal of international collaboration and Republicans more reserved in phrasing their rejection of isolationist doctrine.

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH ISOLATIONISM

A few years ago, the Middle West was the stronghold of isolationism. For unascertainable reasons, Ohio and Wisconsin have been the most extreme in their isolationist faith. There was no evident break in the isolationist front during the years of tension before September 1939; and even through two years of war it was impossible to say that sentiment was swinging materially. Up to the hour of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the great body of Middle Westerners remained firm in the belief that our security and well-being as a nation depended on having the fewest and most tenuous of political ties with the outside world.

The great conversion came in one afternoon, on December 7, 1941. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor was the melodramatic and sanguinary puncturing of a historic political faith. It destroyed the notion that we could escape war by avoiding political

entanglement. It narrowed the oceans which had been relied on as our bulwarks. It humiliated a host of self-styled leaders who had preached isolation as a way of life. The shift of opinion was instantaneous. In other sections of the country, the change may have been more gradual. But here, in the heart of America, the rank and file hit the sawdust trail only after their false gods had been shattered before their scarce-believing eyes. This is borne out by the Gallup poll, published in early July, which shows 32 per cent of Middle Westerners favoring American participation in a league of nations in 1937, and 74 per cent favoring such participation in the middle of 1942.

The line of reasoning behind this abrupt shift of opinion is not subtle. Isolation was held out as a method of avoiding war. It gradually emerged as a method of preventing us from aiding the powers whose interests paralleled those of the United States. And then, all of a sudden, we were the victim of a treacherous and fierce attack, made by the power we had tried hardest to appease. Isolation then was seen as a course which had tended to keep us unprepared for national self-defense. Because the reasoning was simple, the switch of opinion proved fairly complete.

The corollary of this change of sentiment is that isolationist doctrine is discredited politically, at least for the present. There unquestionably remains a sizeable minority of people who cling to isolation, but they are not now a vocal element. Those who present themselves as candidates for public office cannot advance isolationism as a creed. Those who believe in international cooperation can press for it, and do. This is the natural result of a swing of popular sentiment important enough to turn the balance.

WAR AIMS UNFORMULATED

Neither public interest in nor enthusiasm for international cooperation as a positive course of policy has developed along with the revulsion from isolation. There has been virtually no leadership and little discussion of the alternatives to isolationism. Many people accept the necessity for post-war rehabilitation of devastated countries, regarding it as something just as inevitable as the war itself. They rarely think of it as a policy which might serve our own long-term interests as a nation. Some hostility, in fact, exists to any expenditure of American money abroad for post-war rehabilitation, even among those who now repudiate isolationism.

As for long-run world reconstruction, such as a foreign economic policy designed to lift the purchasing power of foreign peoples and advance the standard of living of "the common man" throughout the world, there appears to be little awareness of the problem and, therefore, little feeling for or against proposed solutions. If such a policy were advanced with the admission that it would temporarily lower our own living standards, it would probably have hard sledding in the Middle West.

There is some evident support for tariff reduction. There is no indication, however, that the strong prejudice against lowering the immigration barriers has been altered so as to permit free immigration. If tariff reduction and freer migration of peoples are made an integral part of a program of public expenditure to tide the United States over the coming post-war deflation, they might get by. If not, it will take a great deal of salesmanship to make them palatable.

POLITICAL VS. ECONOMIC COMMITMENTS

Much less resistance to change is evident with respect to political commitments in the post-war world. Political obligations do not appear to exact the temporary sacrifices required by international economic policies. In fact, by calling for the creation of an international police force and an international administration of defeated countries, they promise an outlet abroad for the energies of Americans, both military and civilian. Having reconciled themselves to waging war in the far corners of the world, Americans appear to be reconciled also to long-term, if not admittedly permanent, political-military responsibilities beyond our shores. They do not regard this prospect with pleasure, but as a perfectly logical sequel to our involvement in a world-wide war. Neither do they consider political commitments as having any mutuality. They do not see them as limitations on our sovereignty, but rather as a brand of particularly high-minded and generous imperialism—to which they would never publicly apply that name.

There is, of course, a minority in the Middle West who genuinely embrace the notion of international cooperation and are quite prepared to follow through with the economic and political policies entailed—even at some temporary sacrifice. But it is limited largely to the minority who have regarded the isolation policy of the 1920's as a blunder all along. The majority are not with them, beyond the point of rejecting isolationism.

BITTER ANTI-IMPERIALISM

On the score of imperialism, of the traditional variety at least, Midwestern opinion is emphatic and clear. In this area most people condemn Britain's historic colonial policy, as well as that of the Netherlands and France. They still say—although

more guardedly since December 7—that the Germans and Italians and Japanese were only doing, crudely, what the Allies did in a more gentlemanly way. They have perceived, and disapproved, the paradox of waging war against aggression while defending the imperialist stakes acquired by our Allies through ancient aggressions.

Most people recognize that Britain is a more valuable ally than India, and therefore must be humored for the duration. But they do not retreat from their firm conviction that the Indians are just as much entitled to political freedom as the Czechs or the Poles. They resent the failure of the American government to make any gesture on behalf of India. So far as can be judged, they would welcome the assumption by Washington of a definite political obligation respecting India's future freedom—provided it were advanced as a commitment to the Indians, as against Britain. This view is widely held even among those who vigorously demanded active aid to Britain before Pearl Harbor, and are in no sense Anglophobes.

On a milder scale, the same feeling applies to the Dutch East Indies, and of course to Indo-China. There is no corresponding concern for the right of self-determination of colonial peoples in Africa. Few see this problem as one of relations between economically advanced and economically retarded peoples. They concern themselves only with political relationships, and in this sphere favor self-determination. Consequently, the status of China does not arise as a major issue. There is a strong feeling of comradeship for the Chinese, and of gratitude to them for their heroic resistance to a common enemy. Those conscious of the question believe that extraterritoriality in China should be abolished, and that the American government is negligent in failing to move in that direction beyond an abstract commitment in principle.

Few persons seem to have troubled their minds with the intricate problems of changing over from colonial status to independence while preserving political stability and economic equity. The majority will be content with the formulas worked out by technicians in these matters, if they are persuaded the technicians are acting in good faith and not simply freezing the colonial relationship by resort to red tape.

A WAR WITHOUT IDEALS

In the realm of broader war and peace aims, public opinion is singularly inchoate. There is no significant number of people in the Middle West who regard this as a people's war. Neither do they regard it as a war for positive ends. We were attacked. We are out to destroy the war-making capacity of the attackers. We have national ideals. But we are not fighting to extend them. We are fighting simply for the right to enjoy them without asking any one's leave. That seems to be the plain man's notion.

It is a war of survival. It has few slogans. It is fought in the name of grim necessity; and idealistic aims would only confuse the issue. The Four Freedoms have not clicked, at least in the Middle West. Either Mr. Roosevelt is not as articulate as was Woodrow Wilson, or else the Middle Westerner was too steeped in the cynicism bred of 1919 and 1929 to respond to any clarion call of idealistic purpose. In short, it is not a war of popular enthusiasm but of grim determination, almost inarticulate, and with no defined goal but survival in freedom.

This is not to say that many expect the restoration of the familiar contours of the pre-war world. All admit that things will never be the same. Business men are reconciled to the probable persistence of some governmental controls imposed in wartime. Citizens generally are prepared to see the nation shoulder the task of helping to police the post-war world. Somebody has to manage things in a shrunken world. Many anticipate revolutionary changes abroad at the end of the war. A minority look for a mildly authoritarian drift here at home. But these are mere expectations. They have nothing in common with a positive desire to re-shape the world to a chosen pattern. Exceedingly few have thought much, if at all, about the sort of world in which they would like to live.

HATRED OF WAR

Lest this seem an unduly cynical appraisal, it should be pointed out that the people of the Middle West do have two emphatic convictions. They reject isolation as a political doctrine. And they are determined, with a fanatical and bitter earnestness, not to let another war flood the world again. They are far more earnest in their hatred of war than they were in 1919, or in 1939. Their resolute spirit is strong enough to carry them all the way into the citadel of international collaboration, whatever its cost and however drastic its requirements, if they are convinced that international collaboration does provide a means of averting war in the future.

No vision of a better world of freedom and justice will crystallize the emergent anti-isolationism of the Middle West into a positive faith in international collaboration or world federalism. But the smoldering anger at the renewal of war

in one generation is strong enough to carry the bulk of people along to embrace almost any degree of internationalism—provided they come to believe peace can only be had in an organized world community. If it held out a valid hope of durable peace, they would embrace a *Pax Americana,* founded in our massive power, or, with no less zeal, a whittling down of our national sovereignty in favor of some measure of international government.

In short, they have but one specification for the world of tomorrow—that it be a world at peace. In the absence of articulate leadership, the people of the Middle West have defined their war aim as survival, and have put off the detailed definition of their peace aims.

IN THE NORTHWEST—

BY HERBERT LEWIS, *Editorial Director and Acting Managing Editor,* St. Paul Dispatch; *former Chairman, St. Paul Branch of the F.P.A.; now member of Branch Board.*

It would be easier to forecast where opinion in the Northwest on America's future role in world affairs is moving if it were possible to say with more exactitude where the Northwest stood on that question in the past. The general assumption before December 7, 1941 was that the people of the Northwest were strongly isolationist. The only certainty that can be felt now is that the Northwest was not so isolationist as was generally assumed. The belief that the Northwest was a stronghold of intransigeant isolationism was based partly on *a priori* reasoning, and partly on the fact that, with few exceptions, the states of this region had sent isolationists to Congress.

IS THE NORTHWEST ISOLATIONIST?

The danger of this kind of reasoning is manifest when it is recalled that, in the 1940 general elections, Minnesota gave its electoral vote to President Roosevelt for the third time and re-elected to the governorship Harold E. Stassen, who strongly supported the Administration's foreign policy. At the same time the voters were re-electing United States Senator Henrik Shipstead, who opposed the President on foreign policy as strongly as Governor Stassen supported him. They also sent to Congress a delegation of nine Representatives, all of whom were completely or predominantly isolationist in their thinking.

Such an inconsistency of political performance at a critical moment of World War II can be explained only on the hypothesis, which the history of Minnesota politics supports, that foreign policy has not been the controlling factor in the formation of political opinion. It is probably accurate to say that the states of the Northwest are isolated rather than isolationist. In this remote interior, to project the mind politically into the frame of world events calls for a more affirmative feat of the imagination than is necessary along the Atlantic seaboard.

It therefore frequently happens that political candidates cater to minorities which have positive sentiments on foreign issues; and since these minorities are usually composed of important foreign-born or foreign-descended population groups, the tendency is to take issues of foreign policy out of the election. The result is that ordinarily there is no conflict on foreign policy. Usually the candidates have either been sincerely isolationist, or have felt that it would be safer to conciliate the known feelings of minority elements than to concede such elements to the opposition and fight the election out for the support of the larger unknown vote.

The previous situation in this respect has been reversed in Minnesota this year. The major candidates for Governor and Senator in the Farmer-Labor primary recanted their former isolationism, while the Democratic candidates all supported the President. The primaries resulted in decisive victories for Senator Ball and Governor Stassen in the Republican party (Governor Stassen favors international collaboration by the United States), and for former Senator Elmer A. Benson for United States Senator and former Governor Hjalmar Petersen for Governor in the Farmer-Labor party. All the major candidates are thus anti-isolationist. In addition, Representative Oscar Youngdahl of the Fifth (Minneapolis) District was defeated for renomination—on the isolationist issue—by Dr. Walter H. Judd, medical missionary well-known for his lectures on the war in China.

This development furnishes a clue to current

trends of thought not only in Minnesota but throughout the Northwest. The war, and the manner in which it came to the United States, have unquestionably deeply influenced attitudes toward this country's role in the world. None of the public opinion polls taken before Pearl Harbor bore out the belief that the Northwest differed materially from the rest of the country. As in other regions of the country, there were large majorities who wished to avoid war, but on specific points at issue, such as President Roosevelt's hope that war could be avoided by a policy of aid short of war to the anti-Axis powers, this area was not as "isolationist" as the Middle West proper, and only the merest shade at variance with national percentages.

A good many of the isolationists have merely turned to the public the obverse side of their shield —the side of American imperialism. For them events have only meant that they were mistaken regarding the area in which their nationalism needed freedom of action. From their point of view the proper course now seems to be a more ambitious nationalism. Others — perhaps because they have not yet pursued the logic of their position to its ultimate conclusion—remain of the same mind as before and have only withdrawn to the safe bombshelter of unity to win the war, from which they mean to emerge at a later time entirely unchanged. To judge from the number of important political figures who have recanted, however, it would seem that a substantial number of erstwhile isolationists have fundamentally altered their opinion as to the course along which the United States must find its future peace, security and welfare.

SHOULD U.S. ASSUME WORLD RESPONSIBILITIES?

It is naturally extremely difficult to forecast regional attitudes at the close of a probably long and costly war, but there seems to be evident a quite general assumption that America must assume responsibilities of policing and relief for a period after the cessation of fighting. Thinking concerning long-run world reconstruction has not made much progress. The people of this area have been preoccupied with the war itself, their personal relation to it, the problems which have arisen in their practical affairs, the numerous adjustments necessitated by war conditions. The discussion of postwar problems has not yet reached very far among the rank and file of the population. Unless conscious and quite general efforts are made to cultivate consideration of these questions, the end of the war will probably find a public opinion unprepared to face the complex questions that will arise almost at once.

The necessity for some degree of international collaboration is recognized by most of those who previously were outspoken in their isolationism. Two interesting examples of this shift of opinion are afforded by Elmer Benson and Hjalmar Petersen, leaders respectively of the left and right wings of the Farmer-Labor party. What they and others seem to have in mind is that a repetition of events between 1920 and 1939 must be avoided, that American repudiation of a share in world responsibility was an error contributing to the breakdown of peace.

The degree and character of collaboration which public opinion in the Northwest will be prepared to accept and support will be deeply affected by the economic aspects of the peace. There are, of course, the usual divergences of interest, but by and large the point of view of agriculture dominates the political attitude of this section on economic policies. From the Civil War on there was a natural alliance between American industrial interests and Northwest agriculture. The United States was an importer of capital, and the products of the Northwest states found an ample market in the creditor nations of Europe. There seemed to be no conflict of interest between an agricultural industry producing an exportable surplus, and an expanding industrialism which, more and more, relied on a protective tariff. If such a conflict did exist, it was obscured by the generally rising level of land values, which gave agriculture the illusion, if not the reality, of prosperity.

CHANGED POSITION OF AGRICULTURE

When the first World War boom collapsed, the full force of the new economic position of the United States was felt by the farmers of the Northwest. America had become a creditor nation which was simultaneously attempting to collect from its debtors and exclude their products. The grain producers especially were seriously injured by the altered character of America's foreign trade. They and other farm producers did not benefit directly from the new importance of Western Hemisphere and Far Eastern areas in our foreign trade, but suffered from the increasing difficulty of finding outlets in Europe for their crops. The result, over the past twenty years, has been a weakening of agricultural faith in the value of protectionism. This is not so true of the dairy farmers or the livestock producers as it is of the grain growers, who have learned that tariff rates mean little on a crop of which there is a surplus that must be marketed abroad, if at all.

The farm elements of the Northwest, it seems fair to say, are not wedded to protectionism as a

means of safeguarding their economic interests. They are, and will be, determined to have their interests safeguarded. They can be persuaded to support a national policy calling for a broad exchange of goods and services if it can be shown that they will not be called on to make special sacrifices as a result of other measures. They have had direct experience and a good deal of theoretical indoctrination as a result of their contacts with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and other Federal agencies relating to agriculture. Much would seem to depend on the quality of leadership which is exerted in the years ahead, and especially in the period when post-war policy will be made.

In the cities of the Northwest there has been a growth of industrialization which has diminished the dependence of urban centers on the distribution and transportation services. It is a growth which has been accompanied by a confusion of narrow economic nationalism and broader outlooks. The more important industrialists and some labor leaders are aware that America is part of a new world from which it is impossible to retreat. Smaller industries and less efficient industries—both employers and workers—are certainly as strong as ever for protectionism. That this confusion might congeal into an American imperialism is undeniable. It would be unrealistic to minimize the possibilities of an intensified nationalism, somewhat enlarged in scope but fundamentally not different from that which, in the past, found its expression in isolationism.

The course of the war will have an important bearing on these attitudes. Post-war thinking in the Northwest will depend in large part on the extent to which the experience of war brings the people to a comprehension that this time the risks of peace must take precedence over the risks of war. Much will also depend on the internal policies that may prevail in the post-war period. The maintenance of full employment and continuance of a total public and private national expenditure, comparable to that which will be reached during the war, will predispose agriculture, management and labor alike to adopt attitudes conducive to broad policies of world political and economic cooperation. On the other hand, any considerable stoppage in productivity will probably prevent the development of a reflective, or even experimental, approach to the kind of world that Vice President Wallace and other officials have talked about.

Reading Suggestions

NO matter how much planners of the post-war world may differ on other points, they agree that the United States will play a predominant rôle in world reconstruction. Some writers on the subject do not attempt to draw up a blueprint for American action, but discuss broad principles which, they feel, must be understood if peace is to be built on firm foundations. In this group belong *The Problems of Lasting Peace,* by former President Herbert Hoover and former Ambassador Hugh Gibson (N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1942, $2.00); *The World We Want To Live In,* edited by E. R. Clinchy (N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1942, $1.00); and "America in War and Peace," *New Republic,* September 21, 1942, by A. M. Schlesinger. In an article on "The New Isolationism" (*New Republic,* July 13, 1942), R. L. Strout warns that Pearl Harbor may have caused the isolationists to shift their ground, but has not ended isolationist sentiment. Regional views on post-war reconstruction are discussed in "The Midwest and the War," *Foreign Affairs,* July 1942, by R. F. Blakely; and "Unity and American Leadership," *Yale Review,* Autumn 1942, by W. A. White.

Among the writers who offer more specific programs for the United States after the war, there are several who insist that close cooperation with Britain is the first essential. This point of view is presented in *America and World Mastery,* by John MacCormac (N. Y.: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942, $2.75); *United States' Cooperation with British Nations* (Washington, D.C., National Planning Association, 25 cents); and *Conditions of Peace,* by E. H. Carr (N. Y.: Macmillan, 1942, $2.50). The problems to be faced by the United States in the Pacific after the war have been discussed by G. E. Taylor, *America in the New Pacific* (N. Y.: Macmillan, 1942, $1.75), who stresses the importance of an American policy that would further the liberation and modernization of Asia. In *We're in this with Russia* (N. Y.: Houghton, Mifflin, 1942, $2.00) Wallace Carroll, U.P. correspondent, who visited the Soviet Union in 1941, expresses his belief that the United States and the U.S.S.R. have many fundamental interests in common, and must collaborate once the war has been won, if stability is to be achieved in Europe and Asia.

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AS BRITAIN SEES THE POST-WAR WORLD *by Howard P. Whidden, Jr.*